

prose.<sup>1</sup> Disraeli had called his novel "A Psychological Romance," and to this title he reverted in subsequent editions; but at the suggestion of Milman and under pressure from Murray he now consented to change it into "Contarini Fleming: A Psychological Autobiography." The work appeared in four volumes and with nothing on the title-page to indicate the authorship, but the anonymity was only thinly veiled, many of the reviewers mentioning Disraeli by name.

*To Sarah, Disraeli.*

May 26, 1832.

I received your letter yesterday, and the note you enclosed was from. Beckford, to whom I had sent a copy of *Contarini*. His answer is short, but very courteous. It commences with four exclamations. 'How wildly original! How full of intense thought! How awakening! How delightful!' This really consoles one for Mr. Patmore's criticism in the *Court Journal*.

May 28.

Amid abundance of praise and blame of *Contarini*, one thing which we all expected is very evident, that not one of the writers has the slightest idea of the nature or purposes of the work. As far as I can learn it has met with decided success. Among others Tom Campbell, who, as he says, never reads any books but his own, is delighted with it; 'I shall review it myself,' he exclaims, 'and it will be a psychological review.' Have you read the review in the *Monthly*, where I am accused of atheism, because I retire into solitude to write novels?

July 5.

*Contarini* seems universally liked, but moves slowly. The staunchest admirer I have in London, and the most discerning appreciator of *Contarini*, is old Madame d'Arblay. I have a long letter, which I will show you — capital!

<sup>1</sup> Smiles, II., p. 338. <sup>2</sup> *Letters*, pp. 76, 77.